



# THE COURIER

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## OBSERVATIONS.

Richard Mansfield.

Richard Mansfield is to appear in the role of "Monsieur Beaucaire" this winter. The dash, the gallantry, the heroism of Monsieur Beaucaire, the Duke d'Orleans incognito, is excellently adapted to the cleverness and finesse of Mansfield. That fierce parley between the Duke of Winterset and "Monsieur Beaucaire," when the so-called barber forces the duke to introduce him to Lady Mary, the famous beauty of Bath, will possess great verve and spirit in the hands of this actor. There is such a magnificent opportunity for him where the Duke of Winterset, with his fourteen conspirators, attack Monsieur. The bravery, the wonderful skill with which the Frenchman defends himself, showing in spite of his hidden identity, nobility of character and of birth. Later in the card room scene is place for that wonderful subtlety and grace, wherein lies so much of the charm and magnetism of Mansfield. Only a Mansfield is capable, after the identity of "Monsieur Beaucaire," as Prince Louis-Philippe de Valois, Duke of Orleans, is established of putting the finishing strokes on this old "Watteau portrait."

"Mademoiselle is fatigued? Will she honor me?"

"He bowed very low, as with fixed and glistening eyes, Lady Mary Carlisle, the Beauty of Bath, passed slowly by him and went out of the door."

## The Little Room.

Five or six years ago Chicago newspaper men who had been meeting periodically to exchange notes on their craft, and to cheer each other organized a club which they called "The Little Room," after a magazine

story which one of their number had written. Since then the club has grown, though it has not lost its original informal character. No one can be a member of this club who has not created something worth publishing, listening to, or looking at. Newspaper writers, who write for a day, magazine writers whose work lasts a week or a month, real authors who are responsible for a book in cloth or leather and who have the leisure to write three names, in their signatures, musicians, cartoonists, picture painters, architects, cunning silversmiths and sculptors are members of "The Little Room." The atmosphere of the club is that of a guild where the members understand each other and where ideals of varying kinds but of the same persistency animate all. A husband or wife of a member is not admitted on account of the tender tie. Creation is the indispensable qualification for entrance into The Little Room.

Last week The Little Room gave a banquet to Mr. Field, brother of Eugene Field who left that night to take a position on the Youth's Companion of Boston. Mr. and Mrs. Field have been in the centre of the literary circle in Chicago, which is larger and more real than Bostonians, for instance, credit. Writers who come to Chicago to get material for border tales are entertained by The Little Room and fascinated by the camaraderie, brilliancy and attainments of the membership. I have heard that neither in New York or Boston is there any such meeting of members of allied guilds. There are no literary men of the first rank in Boston or New York who have thought it worth while to organize such a club and the young newspaper men and women and aspiring young artists whose feet are not quite firmly planted on the first rounds of the exigent ladder, but whose eyes rest persistently on the figures balanced on the top rounds have not the prestige to establish anything more ambitious and permanent than a group around a restaurant table. Yet the encouragement and stimulation of meeting people engaged in the same work is as profitable to writers as it is to stone-masons or printers. The establishment and operation of such a club tends to draw literary men to a city and it is not impossible that within the decade the literary atmosphere of Chicago will be as stimulating and as famous as that of Boston in the days of Margaret Fuller, Hawthorne, Emerson, Lowell and Longfellow.

Mrs. Elia W. Peattie is one of the most distinguished and influential members of The Little Room. The excellence and rare quality of her literary work is recognized, and appreciated. She breathes an atmosphere to the remotest vibration congenial and tender. She has bought her father's house in Woodlawn where she was married. It is the middle one of three, wherein her sisters live. All

the houses are surrounded by big oaks. The central room in the Peattie house is a big sitting room built around a deep fireplace, flanked by bookshelves which extend all the way around. Mrs. Peattie herself is the same humane fascinating and unattainable personality she was in Nebraska when we tried to reduce her to familiar terms and failed. Mr. Peattie is one of the editors of "The Chronicle" and is in robust health. He is a very popular member of The Little Room and enjoys everything but the late hours necessary to a worker on a morning newspaper.

Among some of the other noted names in the membership of this club are Mr. Lorado Taft, Mr. Herrick and Mr. Fuller, novelists, Mr. Franklyn Head, Mrs. Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler Mr. Richardson, and many others whose fame is bright.

## A Minority Report.

The committee from the Chicago Woman's club appointed to consider the action of the directors of the General Federation in refusing to accept the credentials of Mrs. Ruffin, a colored woman, has reported. Mrs. Ruffin is a member of the New Era Club of Boston a mixed club of black and white women and not a club of negro women, as reported in these columns recently. She knew that her application for admission endangered the harmony and usefulness of the Federation. Yet she persisted in presenting it. The directors of the Federation laid Mrs. Ruffin's application on the table, which was equivalent to rejecting it. This action, of course, incensed Massachusetts, whose citizens have been peculiarly sensitive on this subject for a long time. And this fall one of the Massachusetts clubs resigned from the Federation because of this action of the directors. In consequence of the radical action of one club it was considered advisable by the Chicago Woman's club to appoint representatives of the pro and anti negro movement to consider the subject and present to the club their report. The committee was composed of Miss Jane Addams, Mrs. Elia W. Peattie, Mrs. Robert B. Farson and Mrs. Granville M. Holt. The majority reported censured the action of the directors, but Mrs. Peattie presented a minority report. This report I hope to publish. A much larger number than she expected applauded Mrs. Peattie's report and the wise reasons which led to her conclusions.

Let us not forget that the union of north south east and west is of more importance than the assumption of a pose which can not help the negro woman. Evolution comes from within and the negro race is not yet ready for the proposed close association. This federation of women is an unique medium of communication between and introduction of the north and the south. So long as a majority of

the southern women do not approve of the admission of negroes they should not be admitted. The Federation is a white woman's club. Its benefits are social and you can not legislate any color or class into society. If negroes were admitted into the women's clubs of the south they could outvote the white women because of their numbers. Negro culture has gone a very little way and we have little sympathy if we fail to put ourselves in the position of southern women confronted by an overwhelming negro population. It is urged that only the aspiring, delicate, refined negro women desire to belong to white women's clubs. What white woman would be willing to enter a club in which she was repugnant to a very respectable minority of the membership? Yet Mrs. Ruffin was willing to endanger the existence of the Federation in order that she might obtain a seat as a delegate in that body.

Mrs. Williams, the only negro member of the Chicago Woman's club, applied for admission to it, and persisted in desiring it though she was cognizant of the disturbance which her application and the discussion of the whole negro question had caused. Such callousness and imperviousness to the opinions and tastes of other people is a remnant of the heathenism of central Africa and an additional reason why, for the present we can not associate with the negro on a level, though we may educate, as teachers, ministers and examples. The negro is too primitive to retain any respect for the white man who voluntarily relinquishes his racial superiority. But the reason of greatest force is the objection of southern women to the admission of the negro, their more exhaustive knowledge of the negro woman's mind, character and habits, their really greater sympathy with the negro and the southern woman's services in the person of an able president and Federation officers, of the national body. To admit the colored women over their protest is a great discourtesy and a racial treason. The Union forever! in all of its manifestations. It is both bad politics and bad statesmanship to give up a positive and accomplished good for a theoretical opportunity of benevolence. The southern women need to realize the north and we need them and their section. The opportunity of getting acquainted by the hundreds in the meetings of the Federation and by correspondence is unique and to destroy it for the sake of a few hundred negro women, whom, I honestly believe, we can not elevate in this way, is a waste of energy and of a great opportunity. The number of women's clubs is rapidly increasing in the south. Their connection with the national body is stimulating and increases very largely the annual sum of accomplishments credited to the G. F. W. C. During this winter the color line will be discussed in most northern clubs. Members of a club